

From: Jana Zanetto [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 3, 2024 10:52 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: March 4, 2024 City Council Meeting Agenda Item 5.A

March 4, 2024
City of San Rafael
City Council
1400 Fifth Ave
San Rafael, CA 94901

RE: March 4, 2024 City Council Meeting Agenda Item 5.A

Dear City Council members,

We are writing today regarding the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway, and Transportation District's (GGBHTD) San Rafael Transit Center Relocation Project, which will have a major impact in our San Rafael community. We believe that a major factor in the transit center's success will be ensuring a positive walking and biking experience there. Because biking and walking is a major way people get to transit in Marin, the better this experience is, the more people will use the system(s)--which will help attain the City's and County's Climate, Sustainability and congestion goals.

Here are our recommendations to you and the GGBHTD:

1. Continue the community stakeholder engagement process:

We are very pleased with the progress, engagement and

conceptual design at this stage of the Transit Center project process. Kudos to GGBHTD and partner agencies for the collaboration and community outreach thus far--it is greatly appreciated! Moving forward there are a lot of details to figure out and design issues to resolve. We ask that the City and GGBHTD continue community stakeholder engagement throughout the next phases of design.

2. Begin planning and designing connections to the Transit Center outside of the project site:

We ask the City to begin to plan and design safe bike and pedestrian connections to the Transit Center through downtown, specifically north to Mission Street (to the North-South Greenway along Highway 101) and east and west, especially to Grand Avenue, which connects to the Canal neighborhood. These are already included in the current 2018 Bike/Ped Master Plan (projects D-1 and D-2) and should be prioritized and also included in the updated 2024 Bike/Ped Master Plan.

3. Evaluate the reconfiguration or removal of the proposed alleyway west of the new Transit Center
The small proposed alleyway seems unnecessary and adds more conflicts between cars, trucks, pedestrians and cyclists. Figuring out a way to meet the needs of private property access and access to the Transit Center without a new street, while potentially using the land to enlarge the plaza would be a major benefit to the community and more comfortable for

people walking and biking to the Center. We suggest multiple pickup & dropoff locations around the Transit Center instead of just one. This would distribute this activity rather than concentrate it, causing congestion and conflicts.

4. Plan the bikeway through the Transit Center at “above the curb” and not at street level

We advocate for either Option 1 “Sidewalk Level Bike Path” or Option 3 “Shared Use Trail” and not Option 2 “Bike Lane at Street Level” as presented by the GGBHTD. Option 2 creates unnecessary trip and crash hazards by locating the bike path below the sidewalk curb and bus platform curb.

5. Provide secure bike parking

We ask that the GGBHTD provide meaningful, high visibility, integrated, and secure bike parking as part of the project so that transit users can bike to the Transit Center. Secure bike parking contributes to improved access and utilization of transit by providing important and convenient “last mile” connections for users.

Thank you for your consideration of our suggestions. And we'd like to thank you for your work on the project so far as well as for your dedication to making San Rafael an amazing place to live and work!

Best wishes,

Jana and Jeff Zanetto
Lincoln Hill, San Rafael



March 4, 2024

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San Rafael City Council
1400 Fifth Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901

RE: San Rafael Transit Center

Honorable Mayor and Council Members,
Sustainable San Rafael has been pleased to serve on the Community Design Advisory Group for the new Transit Center. The conceptual design before you tonight includes the following key elements needed for success, all of which call for continued community involvement to realize their full potential to create a welcoming gateway to downtown San Rafael:

- **Integrated transit operations** of both buses and trains on a single block. The flow and connections among providers will benefit from passenger input.
- **Distinctive paving demarking passenger areas** from bus zones, including quick and easy pathways between buses, trains, and amenities. Again, user input is needed to fully realize this concept.
- **A restored transit depot** including many historical elements from the 1929 depot. The dimensions, degree of enclosure, and interior uses merit further discussion with the public and historical advocates.
- **A landmark quality bus canopy** near Hetherton. Detailed design development and review are needed to assure the success of this primary gateway feature.
- **Integration of the multi-use path** North-South Greenway in a manner recognizing the primacy of passenger and pedestrian use of the Transit Center needs discussion. (See attached 12/13/23 letter and exhibit.)
- **Tall trees framing the Center** and setting a natural character. Plant selection will need careful review.
- **Avoiding more traffic congestion** by reconsidering the proposed new 4th Street intersection behind the depot and finding alternative car drop-off zones.

Thank you for guiding this important project to support transit service and create a compelling gateway to downtown San Rafael.

Sincerely,

William Carney,
Vice President

Attachments: SSR 12/13/23 letter and exhibit



December 13, 2023

Raymond Santiago Principle Planner
Golden Gate Bridge and Transportation District
1011 Andersen Drive
San Rafael, CA 94901

RE: Transportation Committee Update on San Rafael Transit Center

Dear Raymond,

Please convey the following comments for the Transportation Committee's consideration during its meeting this week. Sustainable San Rafael has appreciated the opportunity to work with the District during the years of public involvement in the conceptualizing, design, and review of the proposed San Rafael Transit Center. Much progress has been made towards an exemplary project at the gateway to downtown San Rafael.

We remain concerned that pedestrians and passengers need to be given priority in all aspects of the design, especially those relating to bicycle access. To that end, we strongly endorse the multi-use Option 3 presented at the December 6 public workshop for treatment of bike access at the public plaza fronting the east side of the restored Depot building. This option would integrate bikes and pedestrians in a single shared space, with signage and textured paving to signal cyclists that the space is predominately pedestrian, requiring appropriate speed and care to be exercised by all users.

The multi-use option corresponds with the multi-use bicycle and pedestrian path included in the 2008 SMART ballot authorization, which is fulfilled by the North-South Greenway multi-use path through San Rafael. The one block in the Greenway with the most pedestrian use should likewise be treated with the greatest respect for those on foot as they access buses, trains and the Depot that serves all passengers.

Thank you for your consideration and support of this option.

Sincerely,

William Carney
President, Sustainable San Rafael

Copies:

San Rafael City Council
Cristine Alilovich, San Rafael City Manager

Exhibit A: Amsterdam train station



This photo shows the transition of a separated bike path into a heavily used pedestrian area, in which bikes and pedestrians share a single space. Signage and textured paving signal cyclists that the space is predominately pedestrian, requiring appropriate speed and care to be exercised by all users.